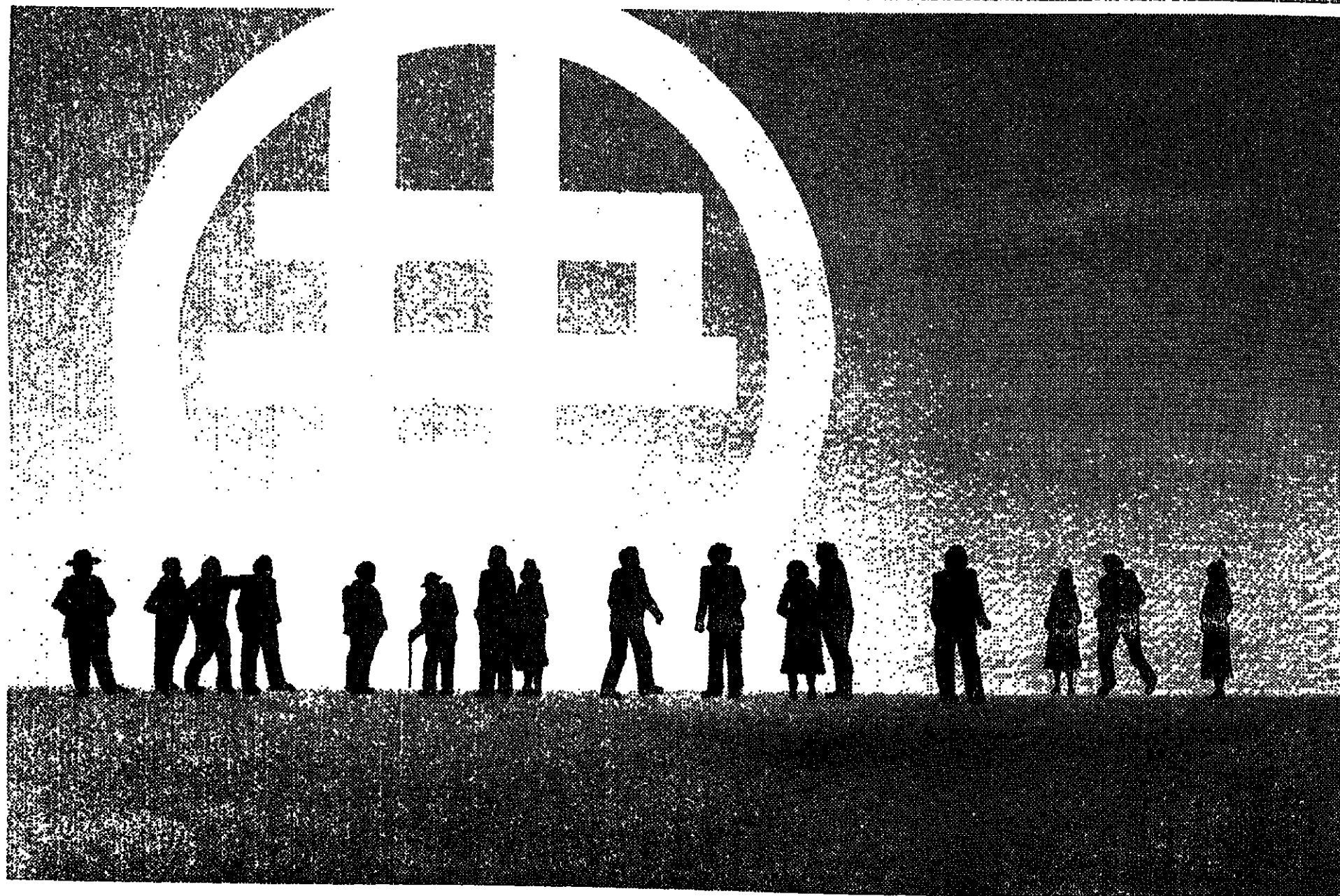


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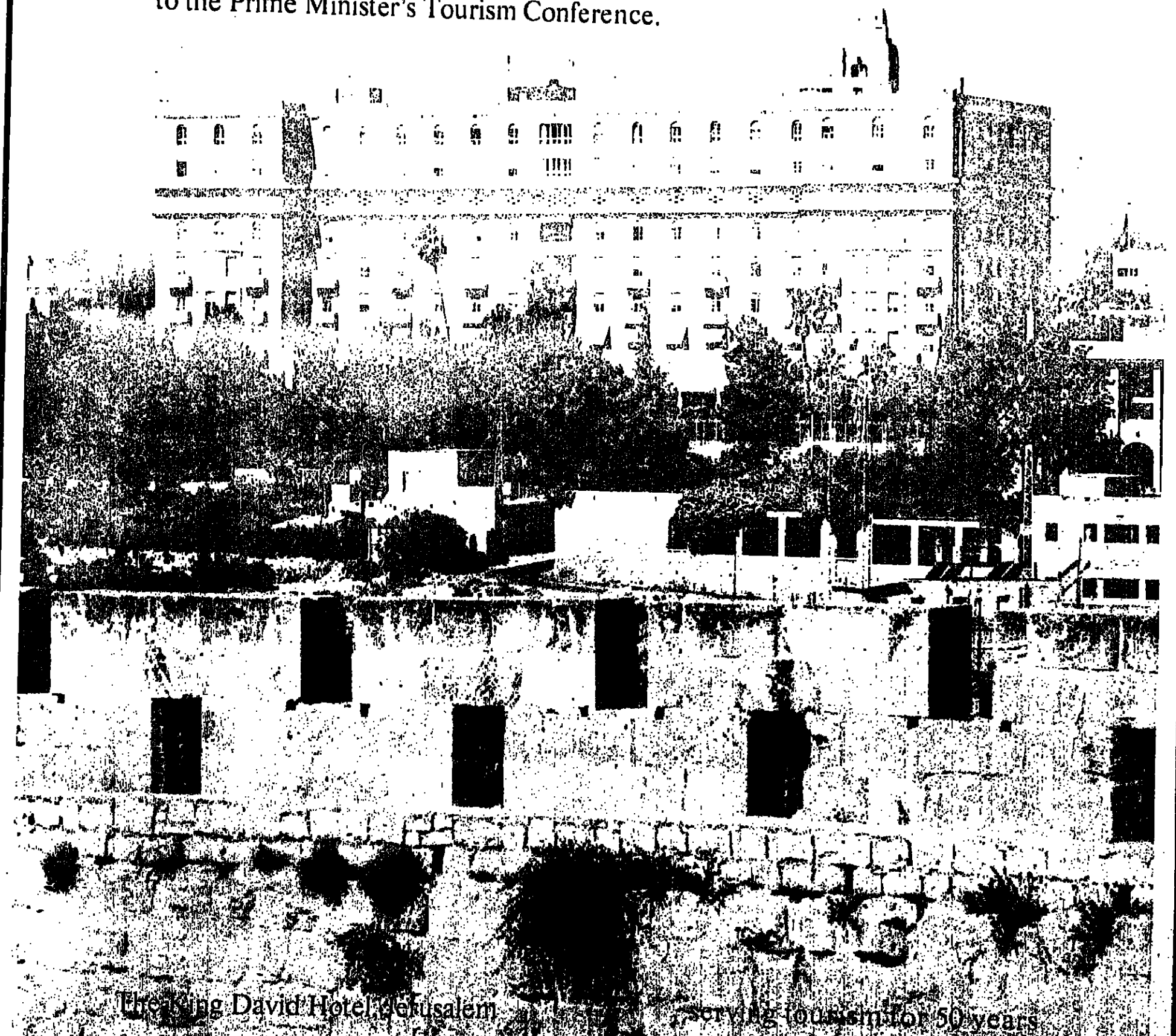
THE JERUSALEM POST Supplement

Sunday, January 31, 1982

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What goes on



Cover photo: Restoration in Rosh Pina, by Israel Talby (story, page 10).

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UNFORTUNATELY, despite its attractions, Israel cannot be considered a country of tourism like Spain or Greece, Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir admitted in an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*.

The first Prime Minister's Conference on Tourism will stress the economic and political importance of tourism for everyone in the country, including the prime minister. In cash terms, Sharir notes, a worker in the field of tourism brings in more than a worker in any other branch of the economy. Despite this, the situation is far from rosy.

For example, he said, the country's hotels had an overall average occupancy rate of only 52 per cent last year. This represents a loss in foreign income of some \$900 million. It should be easy, Sharir says, to increase the occupancy rate and thus improve Israel's balance of payments, which he considers to be Israel's most pressing problem.

On another level, he points out, every tourist who visits the country is a potential ambassador of goodwill.

"We have at hand a captive audience," he says, but adds that making a favourable impression depends on every single citizen. It isn't enough for most people to be hospitable, if others are discourteous. "One unpleasant incident on the way to the airport is enough to ruin the generally good impression the visitor may have of Israel," he says. "I want to show the tourists a beautiful Israel and beautiful Israelis."

It is this message — instead of military news — that the country must promote. In any case, Sharir says he feels the beautiful Israel is a more accurate picture.

He is concerned specifically about the fact that so few Jews from abroad see fit to visit the country. Only 20 per cent of American Jews, for example, have come as tourists, and the latest statistics show that more Germans visit Israel than Jews.

Another area that has been relatively neglected so far is that of "popular" tourism. In the next few years, Sharir says, more efforts will be spent to encourage the building of two-and three-star hotels, rather than the four-and five-star edifices that have dominated most of the country's tourist centres until now. Israel, he says, should be available to a wide spectrum of tourists from the luxury traveller down to the back-packing student.

One area in which special efforts are to be made in the near future is the Dead Sea, an area Sharir considers to be "a gold mine."

"We found a 2,000-year-old cosmetics factory, there," he says, "and it is still a place to go for beauty treatments."

For the Israeli, Sharir is still keen on putting through a bill which would make it possible for an

I'll be back

The tourism industry's biggest problem is to make every tourist who visits Israel want to come back, stresses Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir. This is a job for every one of us, he tells *The Jerusalem Post's* Haim Shapiro.



(Elihu Harari)

employer to pay an employee's vacation in the country without deducting part of the payment from him as income tax. This could be a massive incentive for Israelis to spend their holidays at home, rather than to go abroad. Here Sharir says he has run into the opposition of the finance minister, but is still pressing his case.

"A holiday is something important," he says, "not just a luxury." Experts from around the world have shown that a holiday improves worker productivity, but in Israel, most workers still do not take a real vacation.

Sharir — who came to office in the midst of a local and worldwide tourism crisis — is happy that this year has seen a decline of only three per cent in the number of incoming tourists. In comparison with other countries which lost far greater numbers of tourists, Israel did well.

On the other hand, he notes, each of these three percentage points has been calculated as a loss of \$10m. to the economy: in empty hotel rooms, unused buses, unemployed guides, uneaten meals and unsold merchandise.

THE TOURISM CRISIS was largely a result of problems in the world economy, but local factors also exacerbated the situation. The airlines and charter companies have been engaged in charter price wars, especially in dealing with the UK, that have made some operators shy away from doing business with Israel.

It doesn't help tourism, Sharir says, for a client to buy a package deal and then to read an advertisement in the paper the following week which offers the same tour for £100 less.

Sharir supports the idea of charters, but says that the present anarchy in the field must be eliminated. The charters must be run by established and not fly-by-night companies. Both charters and the scheduled airlines make a contribution to tourism, he says.

Another area of potential trouble in tourism is with taxi drivers and guides who have been known to take the tourist for a ride in more ways than one. During the period in which the country was changing from pounds to shekels, there were continued complaints about taxi drivers.

Nor does it help when guides take their groups to shops where the visitors feel forced to purchase things they don't want, and afterwards regret buying them. In other instances, drivers and guides have been known to act practically as beggars in soliciting tips. All of this, according to Sharir, is undignified and leaves a negative impression. The end result will be fewer visitors and less business for everyone, both the wrongdoers and those who act honestly.

Sharir points to recent "surprise attacks" which the ministry has made on such tourist exploiters and he feels that there has been improvement. In some cases, ministry inspectors have gone along with groups of tourists, while posing as visitors, and have then brought in the culprits.

The world tourism crisis will continue this year, Sharir says, but he hopes that the Prime Minister's Tourism Conference will help offset the slump. He also points to the fact that he has issued quotas to the directors of the government tourist offices abroad. If the quotas are not filled, the directors will be brought home.

If it depended on people in the tourist industry, he says, the figures could start climbing back up this year. But many aspects of tourism are linked with factors quite beyond our control: the political situation, the economic picture — even the dictates of what country is in "fashion" are all out of the hands of the tourism official, although they affect the number of people who come. One incident or statement can shatter all one's efforts.

There are many who make money from tourism including airlines, bus companies, hotels, restaurants and shops. If even one of these is no good, everyone gets blamed. On the other hand, Sharir notes, they have all cooperated in the Tourism Council which he established, and they have all contributed to the conference. It has been the tourism industry which has, in fact, financed the entire conference.

But a consciousness of the importance of tourism is still lacking in Israel. The public does not feel the importance of the industry, and the tourism ministry — he is not ashamed to say — is the smallest ministry with the least resources at its disposal.

The biggest problem now, Sharir says, is to make every tourist who visits Israel want to come back. This is a job for every one of us, tourist worker and ordinary citizen alike. And if we succeed, there need be no tourism crisis.



(Israel Talby)

"Let's all hope that in February 1983 there will be no vacant rooms in Israel to host a Prime Minister's Conference on Tourism"

THE 1800 EMPLOYEES OF THE DAN HOTELS

The Dams of Israel



Hotels and Resorts

EVEN when he was small, Haim Shiff, president of one of Israel's largest hotel chains, thought big. Today, as an experienced hotelier and chairman of the tourism council executive, Shiff is brimming with ideas of how to save Israel's ailing tourism industry.

"The leaders of the nation have never really concentrated on basic things in our economy, and that is why things look bad," explains Shiff. "But the country can be pulled back on its feet and become a model for other countries, like the old pioneers' dream. Then, even Switzerland, and other western countries, would come and learn from us."

Sitting in his spacious office in Tel Aviv's Diplomat Hotel, Shiff expounded on his role in the tourist council in-between telephone calls from his banker and stock broker. Although he was appointed executive chairman of the council only two months ago, he has already initiated a meeting between the prime minister and tourist leaders in Israel, and the international tourism convention sponsored by Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

"My fellow members in the council argued that we needed two years to prepare for such a convention, the biggest tourism convention ever to be held in Israel. But I insisted and managed to make all the arrangements in one month."

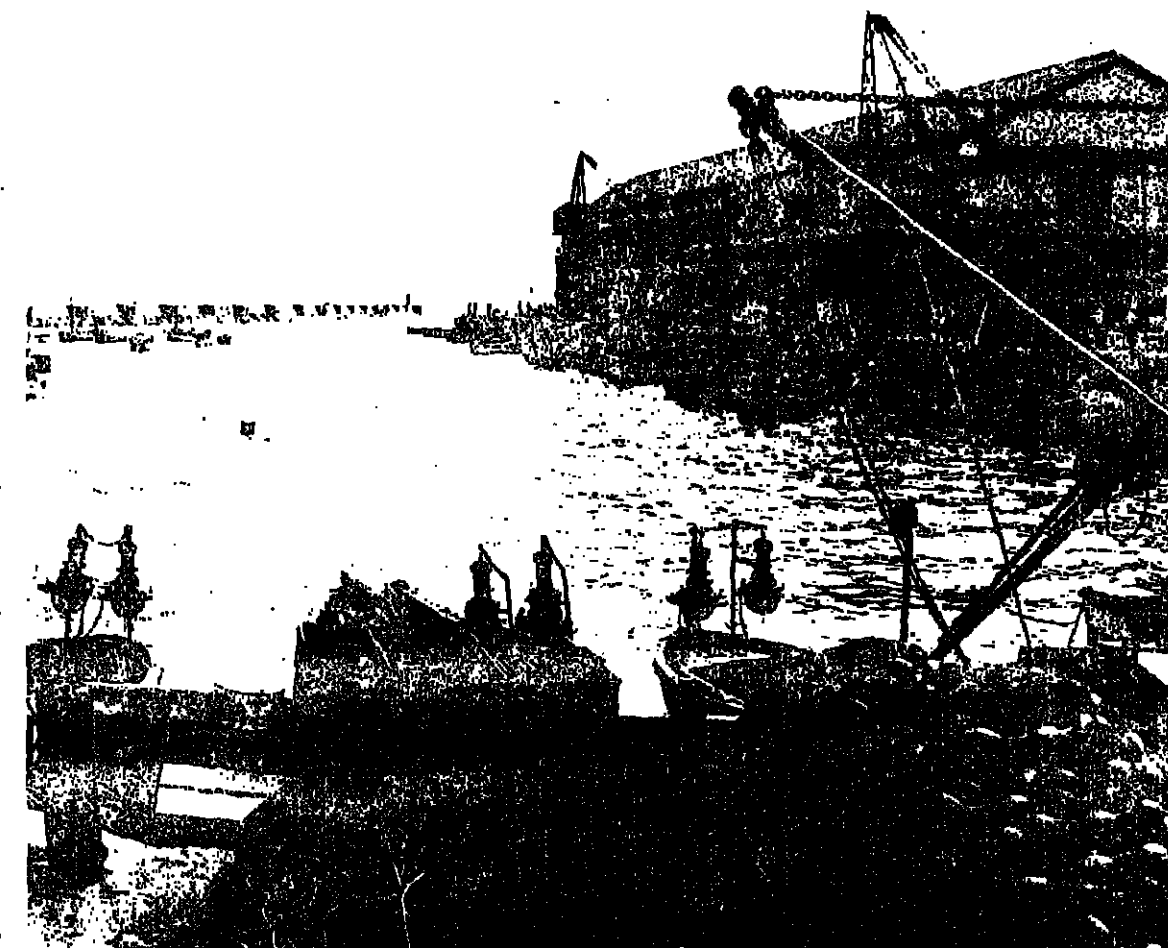
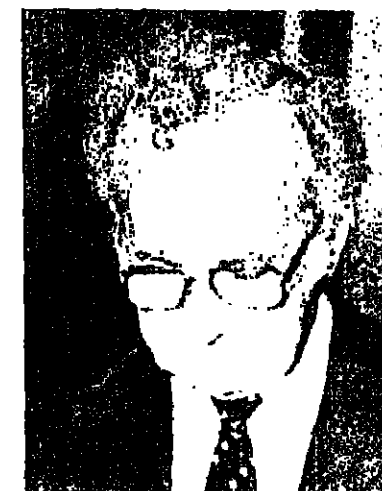
Despite the three to four per cent decrease in tourism to Israel during 1981, Shiff says that with the right marketing and infrastructure, the number of tourists can easily reach two million (more than double of what it is now) annually, in about three years.

Tourism could earn the state three billion dollars a year net, much more than any other sector, if only the right resources — including the experience and ingenuity of the "Jewish mind" — are combined with careful planning, he states.

The Prime Minister's Tourism Conference is expected to be a boost to future tourism in Israel, Shiff said. The prime minister will try to convince the 650 delegates from 22 foreign countries to "sell" Israel to tourists. The delegates, almost all of whom are leading figures in tourism, will give their opinions on Israel's tourism

Revolution

The power behind the current Prime Minister's Tourism Conference, hotelier Haim Shiff, has big ideas for Israel's tourism industry — and the confidence to push them through. Michal Yudelman spoke to him on the eve of the convention.



Jaffa Port — a potential little Venice, with restaurants, nightclubs, art galleries.

problems and how to solve them, "and I hope those concerned will listen and learn," says Shiff.

Each delegate will receive a kit containing, among other things, a special picture book about Israel, which cost \$45,000 to publish — another Shiff idea. The delegates will also receive a medal and an envelope stamped "The Prime Minister's Tourism Conference" by the Communications Ministry.

Shiff also has an idea which will solve paying unemployment to people out of jobs, reduce crime in Israel and promote tourism: establishment of a tourist patrol, with guards wearing special uniforms to protect tourists and keep beaches and other tourist attractions clean. The difference between the wages paid to members of the patrol and the unemployment insurance payments would be filled, if necessary, by the tourism council. "When one is out of a job, one will sooner or later reach prison, which is an even bigger burden on the state," he says.

The tourist council has reached an agreement with the Tourism Minister to prevent cut-throat competition among hotels and airlines. These companies will publish their prices two years in advance, sparing travel agents abroad the embarrassment and losses resulting from publishing one price and having their customers pay another price.

The council will also work with local authorities to develop beaches, hotels, commercial centres and sports facilities. Why should people go to Spain for a golfing weekend and not to Israel, asks Shiff.

Another potential tourist gold mine is Jaffa Port, which Shiff says can be turned into a little Venice, with restaurants, nightclubs and art galleries — without asking the government for money.

"Until now the authorities always thought the Western Wall and Rachel's Tomb were enough to attract tourists," Shiff continues, "but the tourist wants to leave his or her problems at home and find entertainment and fun."

"Israel has a lot to offer, but until now it has resembled a lousy merchant with good merchandise, which he keeps locked away somewhere. All we have to do is learn how to sell it," he concluded.

Israel must adapt to current realities — which means enlarging its budget for tourist promotions — Simon Cooper, general manager of the Dan Hotels, tells Haim Shapiro.

ISRAEL'S BUDGET for tourist promotion last year was about 1/20 of that spent by the state of Alaska, says Simon Cooper, general manager of the Dan Hotels Corporation, in an attempt to explain how hard Israel has to try to attract more tourists.

"There has been a drastic change in the way people buy holidays over the last 10 years and we haven't adapted," he says, not so much with despair, as with determination to change the picture.

"People don't go to travel agents to get advice any more," he says. "They walk in with an advertisement offering a special deal and say 'This is where I want to go.'"

Cooper agreed that in at least 50 per cent of the cases, the client doesn't use the special deal which might be at the wrong time or otherwise unsuitable — but it is the deal that turns him on. To get an idea of the way holidays are sold, he points out, one merely has to look at the travel supplements in any large paper in the U.S. or Europe. They are brimming with advertisements,

most of them including prices.

The development, he adds, was probably started by the cruise ships from the U.S. It then caught on to resorts nearby. Now everyone is doing it. For that matter, the Dams have found that when they promote a package locally, there is a response only if it is accompanied by a price.

And, he adds, it does work. The proof, he says, is a recent promotion by El Al in newspapers in the U.S. East Coast, offering six nights in a four-star hotel for \$699, including the flight. There were over 400 bookings for the first 20 days of January. In contrast, he adds, one large operator has offered a package of similar value in the trade press, which goes to travel agents which, Cooper said, to his knowledge, brought in not more than 10 customers.

"We have to hit the consumer in his home," he said, adding, "Unfortunately, that costs a lot of money." Current budgets cannot begin to cover that sort of thing.

Help!

Practising what he preaches, he points to his campaign, featuring the 50th anniversary of the King David Hotel, offering a week's stay at 1932 prices to any couple celebrating their 50th anniversary at the hotel. Two couples actually took them up on it, to have bed and



breakfast at 340 grush (or \$0.77) per person. But he adds, both brought their family to celebrate, bringing in an additional nine or 10 guests per couple at full rates.

As far as the King David is concerned, Cooper has few worries. After 50 years, he feels a hotel builds up a reputation that, if it keeps up its standards, will keep the clients coming. But in general, he feels that the future will move towards more moderately priced hotels catering to mass markets.

He admits that the Dan's five-star hotel due to open in Eilat next year will be a problem, until there is an airport in Eilat to handle scheduled flights from abroad.

Other plans for the chain include holiday villages and hotels overseas. Two hotels are already planned for Nairobi and Mombasa in Kenya and the Dams are also looking into the possibility of a hotel "where Israelis go," although Cooper would not specify exactly where.

The chain has its eye on Tiberias as well, but the main thrust of ex-

pansion will evidently come in the direction of holiday villages offering rates which can appeal to Israelis as well as foreign tourists. But Cooper adds that he does not believe the problem of attracting Israelis is necessarily that of offering rock bottom rates. He believes Israelis have money, but the hotel has to give full value for it.

In the food field, the trend is to get away from the main kitchen with its dining-room serving heavy meals. He is aiming for more visible satellite kitchens, offering food in restaurants with themes. In Tel Aviv and Haifa, he said, the hotels have virtually done away with the main dining room.

"If we don't entertain the client, he'll just walk out the door to eat elsewhere."

All this is in preparation for a time when travel agents become more and more superfluous. "The time will come," he predicts, "when people will just call a number and give their credit card number to buy a holiday."

THEIR IDEA of fun is a brisk walk to the Western Wall, a Talmud class with a brilliant rabbi or the singing of their favourite *Zimrat* songs around the Shabbat table.

Israeli hotels that have relied on discotheques, mini-theatres and gimmicky dinners to entertain their guests have found that these "attractions" mean nothing to the biggest potential tourist reservoir — Orthodox Jews from the West.

Until only a few years ago, there was no place where Orthodox tourists prepared to spend freely on a vacation could feel truly comfortable. Seeing that their discotheques are sparsely populated due to the slump in tourism, and sensing that religious Jews can be counted upon to visit Israel whether the economy is healthy or not — and even if the sun isn't out — hotels are falling over themselves to attract this special clientele.

The Jerusalem Plaza Hotel, located within walking distance of the Western Wall, was the pioneer among five-star hotels aiming to please the Orthodox. Ironically, it was the seemingly incongruous team of a British-born Protestant and a black-kattan-clad chief rabbi of Jerusalem who set the course. Simon Cooper, the first manager of the Plaza who is now director-general of the Dan Hotel chain, had never heard of such Hebrew or Yiddish words as *glatt*, *matzah*, *trif* or *shmita* when, in his early 30s, he was hired to run the hotel.

He learned quickly from Jerusalem Chief Rabbi Bezalel Zolti, who insisted that the hotel not only be strictly kosher, but also that the Jewish Sabbath — sundown Friday to sundown Saturday — should not be desecrated by having Jewish employees perform work not permitted on the Sabbath.

The chief rabbi bargained for every detail — a special Shabbat elevator, no laundry or shops open on Saturdays and holidays, no imported (unkosher) wines on the menu, no public exchange of money, no cooking of foods when it is not permissible. Soon, other Jerusalem hotels saw that the Plaza was enjoying almost full occupancy — with an almost totally Orthodox

Every little thing

Israeli hotels are only now waking up to the greatest potential tourist reservoir — Orthodox Jews from the West, writes Judy Siegel.



Rabbi Zvi Finkelstein, kosher supervisor at the Jerusalem Hilton Hotel, enjoys a cake in the Judea Lounge. (Richard Charbit).

clientele — and bent to Rabbi Zolti's demands.

The Plaza's near-monopoly hold on this special market has been broken by the appearance of the

Sheraton's King Solomon Hotel, a few blocks south on Rehov Keren Hayesod. Conscious of the Orthodox tourism potential, directors of the Sheraton chain in Israel

agreed to make its "religious affairs manager," Rabbi Yosef ("Yossi") Tirnauer, a member of the Sheraton's board. "I insisted that I have enough clout," says the young rabbi, whose manner blends religiosity with a keen business sense.

The hotel was planned with the needs of the Orthodox tourist in mind. Rabbi Yossi claims that it is the only hotel in the country, perhaps the world, with 40 private *suva* hoths available on the balconies of hotel rooms and suites. Waiters take orders on Shabbat by inserting pegs on a board, instead of writing down room numbers and choices. Special "Shabbat" refrigerators are used on weekends.

"We spent IS420,000 to develop a special coffee maker that operates according to Halacha (Jewish religious law) on Shabbat and holidays," boasts the rabbi. In addition, telephones are banned from the lobby when their use is forbidden, and the Muzak in the lobby ceases on Shabbat and festivals.

Since about 95 per cent of the guests are religious, he continues, it is rare that someone would light up a cigarette in the lobby on Shabbat. "But if it happens, our waiter naturally tells him politely that smoking desecrates the Sabbath." The hotel serves no frozen meat since this is frowned upon by the ultra-Orthodox, and the hotel observes the *shmita* (Sabbatical) year, by avoiding use of produce grown in such a year.

"THEN THERE ARE the Extras," continues Rabbi Yossi. *Matza shmurat* (the carefully watched and very expensive unleavened bread) is distributed to all the guests before Pessah; explanatory leaflets on every Jewish holiday are distributed; the *havdala* ceremony is conducted *en masse* in the lobby at the conclusion of the Shabbat.

The King Solomon actively promotes bar mitzva "packages" for Israeli and Diaspora guests, organizing services at the Western Wall as well as the reception in the hotel. Rabbi Yossi believes that the potential for such "packages" is

almost unlimited.

Aside from the Plaza and the Sheraton, "five-star tourists" still don't have many options. The hotel being completed in the Omariya plot across the street from the Sheraton (its name is still under dispute due to a court case) will also be *glatt* and luxurious. (*Glatt* means that the chefs reject any meat that is even remotely suspected as being questionable from the kashrut point of view.)

Ultra-Orthodox tourists also stay at the much-less-posh Central Hotel in Jerusalem (owned by Aguda MK Rabbi Menachem Porush). Kibbutz Hafez Haim's guest house (near Gederat), the Aristo Hotel in Tiberias, the Galei Zanz Hotel in Netanya, and the Wischnitz Hotel in Bnei Brak. The Sheraton plans to open a *glatt* kosher hotel in Eilat in 1984.

"RELIGIOUS tourists are very pedantic, particular, even spoiled," says Rabbi Binyamin Perry, long-time Plaza Hotel rabbi who is moving to the hotel in the Omariya plot. "If they don't find what they want, they look for other alternatives — Europe, Puerto Rico, even the Canary Islands, rather than Israel."

"A large percentage of Jewish tourists in Israel are religious — and their share is growing. If it is true that only one-fourth of American Jews have been here since 1948 — and many of those are repeats — a large part of American Jewish tourism is religious," he continues.

Even some of those who do not observe Shabbat and *kashrut* at home will not ride on the Sabbath or eat a *trif* (unkosher) meal in Israel. Even those who don't observe *kashrut* in Israel are usually willing to go along with the requirements of Shabbat and *kashrut* in hotels like the Plaza and the Sheraton.

Rabbi Perry urges that a Jewish tourism council be established by the various authorities in order to capitalize on the interest of religious Jews in Israel, and to bring them here. These hundreds of thousands of potential tourists, he concludes, can provide a permanent boost to the country's tourism industry.

THE PROLIFERATION of UJA, UJA, Hadassah, WIZO, Pioneer Women, American Mizrahi Women and American Jewish Committee tour buses crowding the parking bays of four- and five-star hotels, create the impression that Jews from all over the world are flocking in droves to Israel.

Yet statistics show that despite the visibility of those Jewish travelers, Christians have an edge on tourism in this country.

According to Chaya Fischer who heads the Christian Tourism Department at the Ministry of Tourism, and is the pivot of The Israel Pilgrimage Committee, some 600,000 Christians came to Israel in both 1980 and 1981. This represents roughly 55 per cent of all tourism.

"The Catholic tourist," she says, "does not attain total spiritual fulfillment in Rome, and completes a religious pilgrimage by continuing on to Jerusalem."

America is the take-off point for most Jewish tourists and a significant number of Christian tourists coming to Israel. Fischer observes that while there are quite a lot of individual Christian tourists, they usually come in groups. Denominations represented in regular organized group tours are the Southern Baptists, the Methodists, the Pentecostal Church and the Mormons. Groups coming from Scandinavia, Germany, South Africa and Holland are primarily Lutheran.

Other than the U.S. and Germany, Christian pilgrims mainly come from France, England, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Taiwan, India, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

That inner light

More Christians than Jews are visiting Israel, Greer Fay Cashman learns from Sister Elisabeth of the Christian Information Centre.



In 1973, the Franciscans set up a Christian Information Centre (CIC) for tourists in a spacious, imposing building inside Jaffa Gate. The centre works in a spirit of cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism, but is an independent operation funded by the Church. It receives no financial aid from the government of Israel, but it does receive other forms of assistance.

"The Ministry of Tourism is not obliged to help us, but they do," says Belgian-born Sister Elisabeth, who works at CIC and came to

Israel in 1974 after having served her order for many years in Africa. Sister Elisabeth has a heavy, well-compartmentalized file on everything the Christian tourist in Israel may want to know, including information on nearly 40 different denominations.

By maintaining constant contact with churches belonging to all denominations, Sister Elisabeth, and others working in the CIC, can immediately direct tourists to church services, Christian communities, Christian holy places,

hotels and hostels, biblical institutions, libraries, research centres and institutes of higher learning, museums, and Christian charitable institutions.

The centre has compiled a list — in English — of Egged and Arab bus routes in Jerusalem and has printed its own map of Christian Jerusalem, which, in addition to the Fourteen Stations of the Cross, includes other sites mentioned in the New Testament. The map also offers suggestions for tours to other places of interest to Christians such as Bethlehem, Jericho, Bethany, Nazareth, Mount Tabor and the Galilee region.

Jews interested in Christian studies also come to the CIC to ask about lectures and seminars and, says Sister Elisabeth, an elderly Rabbi is a frequent visitor there simply because he is looking for conversation. Tourist guides also come to the CIC to update their knowledge.

There are certain patterns to Christian tourism, according to Fischer at the Ministry of Tourism. Catholic pilgrims usually confine themselves to sites mentioned in the New Testament and if there is time, will add visits to a kibbutz and Masada. Protestants want to walk in the footsteps of everyone mentioned in the Bible — both the Old and the New Testaments — and therefore are eager to tour the whole country.

Whenever any ancient Christian site is rediscovered, the Ministry updates its maps to enable Christian pilgrims to expand their spiritual experiences.

Christian Tourism to Israel

began operating on a grand scale in 1950, following two years of preparation for Holy Year, which occurs only four times a century. When the initial steps were taken to promote Israel as a place for Holy Year pilgrims, the Ministry of Tourism did not yet exist. The Tourist Department, which had been operating on behalf of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Foundation Fund after the establishment of the State, became a part of the Ministry of Immigration in the provisional government.

The department subsequently evolved into the Israel Tourist Centre and later the Government Tourist Corporation. It was not until December, 1964, that the Cabinet decided to establish a Ministry of Tourism with Akiva Govrin at the helm.

Until this ministry was accorded status in its own right, Christian tourism was largely the province of the Israel Pilgrimage Committee, presently an inter-ministerial body which was founded in 1949. At that time, arrangements were made to enable Christian pilgrims to cross through no-man's land, between Old and New Jerusalem, via the Mandelbaum Gate.

Since 1967, people of all faiths have been able to explore Jerusalem's holy sites without being subjected to either physical or political obstacles.

The potential for Christian tourism is enormous, and now that there is peace with Egypt, more Christians are taking advantage of package tours which enable them to visit both countries.

WHAT LOOKED like a mismatch between Israeli hotels and university students in the late 1960s is now a happy union. The hotels, or at least their managements, overcame their somewhat dull image of that time, while the students changed their notions of what constitutes work appropriate to their "status."

Today hundreds of students, mainly in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, work part-time in a wide range of non-professional hotel jobs which, for some, have developed into promising careers.

Neither the students nor the hotels need to be persuaded now of the mutual advantages of this arrangement. The hotels solved their growing manpower shortage by employing young, intelligent Israelis able to converse with guests in foreign languages. And, even if they often do lack professional polish, the students add a bit of spice to the hotel atmosphere. For them, the part-time work and the flexible hours there make it possible to fit a job into a busy academic schedule.

About five years after the Tourism Ministry's effort to interest students in hotel work had failed, along came Harold Richman, the new manager of the Tel Aviv Sheraton. He set out to improve the image of Israeli hotels and saw students as the ideal vehicle for this.

Eight days a week

Students are adding spice to the hotels' atmosphere, Charles Hoffman reports.



Student in training at the Jerusalem Sheraton.

(Karen Benzlant)

The Sheraton's successful effort to recruit and train students was taken after 1977 as the model for the courses now organized by the ministry in conjunction with university student unions and a handful of interested hotels.

Since 1977, about 500 students have passed through these courses. The trend seems to have been taken by students from North and South America, who are apparently less status-conscious, and were followed into hotel work by increasing numbers of Israelis.

THE COURSE, actually a three- to five-day orientation session held at a sponsoring hotel, includes a general explanation of how a large hotel operates and specific instruction in the tasks students may be asked to do. Students are offered jobs as cashiers, bellhops, waiters, dishwashers, reception clerks, telephone operators, maintenance, security personnel and chambermaids.

The basic requirement, according to ministry officials, is a willingness to do almost any kind of work. And maybe also a haircut — a neat appearance is important in hotel work.

The minimum hourly wages at hotel jobs are fixed by the student employment service, and range from IS24 to IS33 according to the

student's level of studies. Hotel workers usually get extra money from tips, and enjoy a free meal during their shift. As with all student jobs, there are no social benefits.

The programme operates today only in large hotels that are part of a chain: in Jerusalem, the Plaza, Diplomat, Sheraton, Ramada and Hilton hotels; and in Tel Aviv, the Sheraton, Hilton, Dan and Larome hotels. Big hotels with a wide range of positions to fill and a sophisticated approach to personnel matters seem to provide the best environment for student employment. In these hotels, the regular staff is large enough so that the students may serve as a useful supplement. The Sheraton hotels, where students comprise 40 per cent of the staff, are an exception.

The Sheraton chain is exceptional in another way, too, since from the beginning it has actively encouraged its part-time student employees to give serious thought to hotel careers. And some have. Most of the Sheraton's department heads in Israel today began as students.

Students not working for other hotels who are interested in careers in the field may apply to the hotel management course run by the Tourism Ministry and the Israel Hotels Association.

The Minister of Tourism
The Director-General of the Ministry of Tourism
and
The Ministry Staff

Extend best wishes to the tourist industry in Israel,
the Tourism Council and the participants in

The Prime Minister's Tourism Conference

and wish them fruitful deliberations and every success in
promoting the country's objective of two million visitors a year.

ON A bright January day, people in Rosh Pina were looking forward, looking backward, debating the blurred domain of "now."

Amihud Schwartz, 73, sat on new steps in the old village, looked out at the cemetery on the facing hill: "That just shows how stubborn our parents were," he said. "They could have found an easier place to dig graves, but no, they had to choose a hillside full of rock."

Schwartz, the grandson of one of the founders of the village, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, is full of stories about their persistence in finding a place to spend their lives, as well as their deaths. But he too inspects Janus-like, future as well as past: "What I'm proudest of is that all my grandchildren — I have nine — are also living here."

The Society for the Restoration of the Founders' Village was set up five years ago, partly on the initiative of the late Yigal Allon, to restore the houses of a hardy band of Rumanians — 30 families — who set up the first Jewish village in modern Galilee in 1882, and were taken under the wing of the Baron Edmond de Rothschild the next year.

Slowly, the split stone and bare bone of the old houses is taking shape under red tiled roofs. Beit Pjca (Palestine Jewish Colonization Association) where the Baron's clerks supervised his projects in all the Galilee; the home of Professor Meer, who led the fight against malaria; the doctor's house; the teacher's house; the first Hebrew hotel in the new Yishuv; the synagogue; and the ordinary houses of an extraordinarily tenacious community.

The purpose of the restoration is education as well as recreation, according to Maimon Abukrat, a former teacher and youth worker in the village, who now manages the restoration project. Beit Pjca, where he has his office, also contains two lecture halls, a library and archives of Galilee history. From the huge balcony at the back of the house, the Baron's clerks used to keep an eye on things. Today it is lined with the remains of old wooden and metal plows, awaiting their place in a museum of early agricultural implements, and an old Turkish wooden chest covered with crescent-decked metal sheeting. Inside — paper, bins of wood, empty cigarette packs.

This midrash, study centre for Galilee history, already draws groups of students and soldiers for seminars. Amihud Schwartz, sitting in the sun and looking across at the cemetery, is waiting to give his pitch and tour to a group of students from Bar-Ilan University. Suddenly, in the middle of our conversation, a group of soldiers descends, and we sit like two rocks poking out of an olive drab stream which rushes noisily down the steps. When the commotion subsides, Amihud says no, he isn't disturbed by the strangers crashing into his quiet corner. "If the project is done carefully, it's okay. This is the only place in the country to show young people and tourists how people settled here 100 years ago." Down to the mud-and-straw plaster (authentic but cracking) on one wall of a restored "typical" house.

Some people do resent the influx or at least have mixed feelings about it. They are neither founders nor sons nor grandsons, but artists, writers and craftsmen who, within the last 12 years or so, spotted empty houses in the midst of tuffed green velvet rock, and brought their

I believe in yesterday

Rosh Pina, a community of 1,500 set in the hills of Galilee, is celebrating its 100th anniversary by restoring its oldest buildings and organizing an artists' quarter. 'Progress' has its problems, as Marsha Pomerantz reports.



Neti Benai's rented balcony, where she cultivates herbs. On the hill, opposite, cemetery below cypresses.

souls to stay.

"With all these museums, we're afraid they'll just teach how people lived, instead of living," said Itai Elohevi (the name means "God loves"). He is a carpenter and grows vegetables; his wife Tali is an artist. They moved into the old village about eight years ago, bought their house, like four other families, and used their own money to renovate it. Now some government money is available for further renovations, and an artists' colony is planned for their street. They know they stand to benefit from that part of the project, but they want to be informed about the restoration society's plans and consulted about changes which will affect their lives.

The way they see things, it was the founders' sons who ditched the original village, high on a hill, and built their houses in the new village, closer to their fields in the valley. (Amihud explains how hard it was, in the horse-and-wagon days, to bring supplies up the steep slope.) In any case, the artists say, since they rediscovered the charm of the old village, and settled in at first without such amenities as running water and electricity, they deserve to be taken into account in the current restoration.

In fact, the problems between the artists and the restorers seem to be more a lack of communication than real conflict. Amihud said the young settlers were welcomed when

they first moved in. "Later, there were problems with hippies who came with drugs from other parts of the country. It's lucky our kids weren't attracted to them." When the restoration began, the "negative element" left or were forced out, and the 25 or so residents who remain are considered citizens solid enough to be more of an enrichment than a threat.

It's a question of who knows what's good for whom: Maimon, listening to impressions I had gathered on a walk down the artists' street, said, "They're egotistical. They speak for themselves. When I general, it's for everybody, for the general public, for the people of Israel."

And he plans with all his heart. He points out the garden below the balcony of Beit Pjca, which is "modelled after the garden of Versailles," just as the French Baron wished it. Below the balcony is an arched basement still under construction, and destined to be a restaurant.

On the hillside below Beit Pjca, facing the cemetery, an amphitheatre is being built for sound-and-light shows. Awkward location? No. "If it's true that the dead walk at night, then why shouldn't they enjoy themselves? And if it's not true, then why worry?"

His plans for the garden include stationing some 19th-century plows there, "With maybe a little sculpture of a cow." That prompts the question about the possible dangers of overplanning. Maimon bucks off a little, says the cow probably won't come about, and in any case derives from his considerable enthusiasm. "But you can't do anything without it," he stresses.

What is the organization behind the project, and where do the funds come from for all this? The reconstruction society is a non-profit organization which was headed by Yigal Allon until his death. He has been succeeded by Yigal Hurvitz, who was invited to take the position when he was finance minister — despite his constant declaration that his pockets were empty.

The society was set up by the Rosh Pina local council, headed by Zvi Laski. Laski is an army man, which means he presses for efficiency, but, say the artists on the hill, his understanding of their needs has been less than complete. Itai the carpenter says Laski has admitted to them that he fears the word "artist," partly because he associates it with Farkash — a legendary but real jail-breaker and chess-player who used to live in the caves around Rosh Pina and drop in among the artists for a game. The question: how do founders and sons cope with free spirits?

Money for the restoration comes from various representatives of the social order: government ministries, the Rothschild Foundation, Mifal Hapayis (the national lottery), the Wolfson Foundation, the Rumanian Immigrants' Association, the World Leadership of Betar, and many others.

Rosh Pina had one of the leading Betar regiments during mandatory times, and another cellar under the Baron's balcony has been set aside as a sort of shrine to Shlomo Ben-Yosef, the Betarnik who was the first Yishuv Jew hanged by the Crown. Ben-Yosef and two friends, Shalom Djurban and Avraham Shein, attempted a reprisal for a 1938 Arab attack on a taxi in which six Jewish passengers were killed: the three threw a bomb at an Arab bus, but it didn't go off. They hid in the Baron's basement, where the British found them. Djurban was judged mentally unstable; Shein was a minor; Ben-Yosef got the maximum sentence for arms possession. His tomb in the Rosh Pina cemetery across the wadi is a focus for Betar pilgrims; a slide show in a small auditorium in the basement describes Ben-Yosef's last days in Acre prison, his devotion to the teachings of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, his hero's death.

Money for maintenance of the shrine comes from the Interior Ministry, says Maimon, who denies that there is any current political significance to the site. Yigal Allon

(Continued on page 12)

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(Continued from page 10)

began the restoration project, after all — though specific budgetary allocations under the present government may have influenced the rate of development of specific projects.

In any case, Maimon, who says he is a Herutnik, clearly believes that the history written by Second Aliya Labourites is skewed and needs some balancing.

Balance. The slide show in the Shrine describes the Arabs of the pre-state period as "opposed to change and progress": pictures of the Jewish children they massacred rest on the screen for a small eternity.

But relations between Arabs and Jews on this hill were once very good. In 1876, even before the Rumanians arrived, a small group of Jews from Safad decided to stop living off the Jewish dole and try to make their living from the land. They bought land from the Arabs of Ja'ane — the village which once occupied the hill — and lived among them in peace. Later, tensions developed, many of the Jews left, and the remaining four families joined the Rumanian settlement called Rosh Pina in 1882.

In 1948, says Amihud Schwartz, the Arabs of Ja'ane were suspected as collaborators with the Jews; under pressure from other Arabs, they left for Syria. That's one side of the story.

By coincidence, I heard another side that evening in Safad, where I ate dinner. I was the only diner in the restaurant, and the waiter, a young Arab from Saknin, in the Western Galilee, brought over his Coke and joined me. When he heard what I was doing in the area, he said, "You know, Rosh Pina was originally an Arab village." I knew.

"It's a disaster, what happened there." Did he have relatives at Ja'ane? Only distant ones. And what happened to them? "Half were destroyed, and half escaped to Syria." Then he had to get back to setting tables.

Amihud, standing in the Rosh Pina sun the next day, tells some students about the better days for Arabs and Jews: once, very early in the history of the Jewish settlement, a Jew, firing shots of joy into the air (trying out the Arab-style) at the community's first wedding, accidentally killed the Arab who had suggested the volley. The sheikh of Ja'ane put all the Jews in his courtyard and protected them against those who were screaming for their blood, until compensation could be worked out.

Amihud himself remembers the relentless health inspections at school during World War I. Cholera, typhus and trachoma were rampant, and the elders were adamant about clean feet, clean hands, and, for the boys, shaved heads. Any teacher who noticed a head-sprout immediately dispatched the offender to the barber — Tewfik of Ja'una, who had a contract with each family. He snipped and shaved as required, for an annual measure of barley and wheat.

Those relations, at least at this site, are not likely to be restored. But there will be — Maimon continues his tour up the cobbled street — Sabbath services in the old-new synagogue, and a sauna at the site of the ritual bath underneath it, a small hotel, dorms for soldiers attending seminars and, on the The Street of the First Settlers, where the private houses are, an artists' colony, with galleries, facilities for an arts-and-crafts market, and workshops where visitors can come and study with



Rehov Hanadiv, where a stream once ran. At centre, the restored synagogue. A Mulberry tree at left was once used to feed a silk industry.

visiting artists.

The artists and craftsmen are worried about the projects planned for their street. Itai Eloheiv, the carpenter-farmer, assembled some of them in his house to express their concern. Amid hand-crafted wooden furniture and Eastern wall-hangings — he and his wife have recently returned from a trip to Europe, the U.S. and India — he served a delicious tea made of local herbs.

The artists are concerned that the restoration society is subject to the

decisions of the local council, and does not take into account a wide enough segment of the local population. (Maimon told me that the society had asked for a representative of the artists, but so far none had stepped forward.)

Aviva Shafat, who has two children and seems to be one of the more articulate spokesmen for the artists, says she's been occupied with building her own house from scratch for the last three years and running around for the necessary building permits. Now she realizes

that the public restoration has caught up with her. "It's my own neglect," she says, but she's determined to take an active role now. The group was planning a meeting in which they would draft a letter demanding three months' prior notice of any change the restoration society was planning.

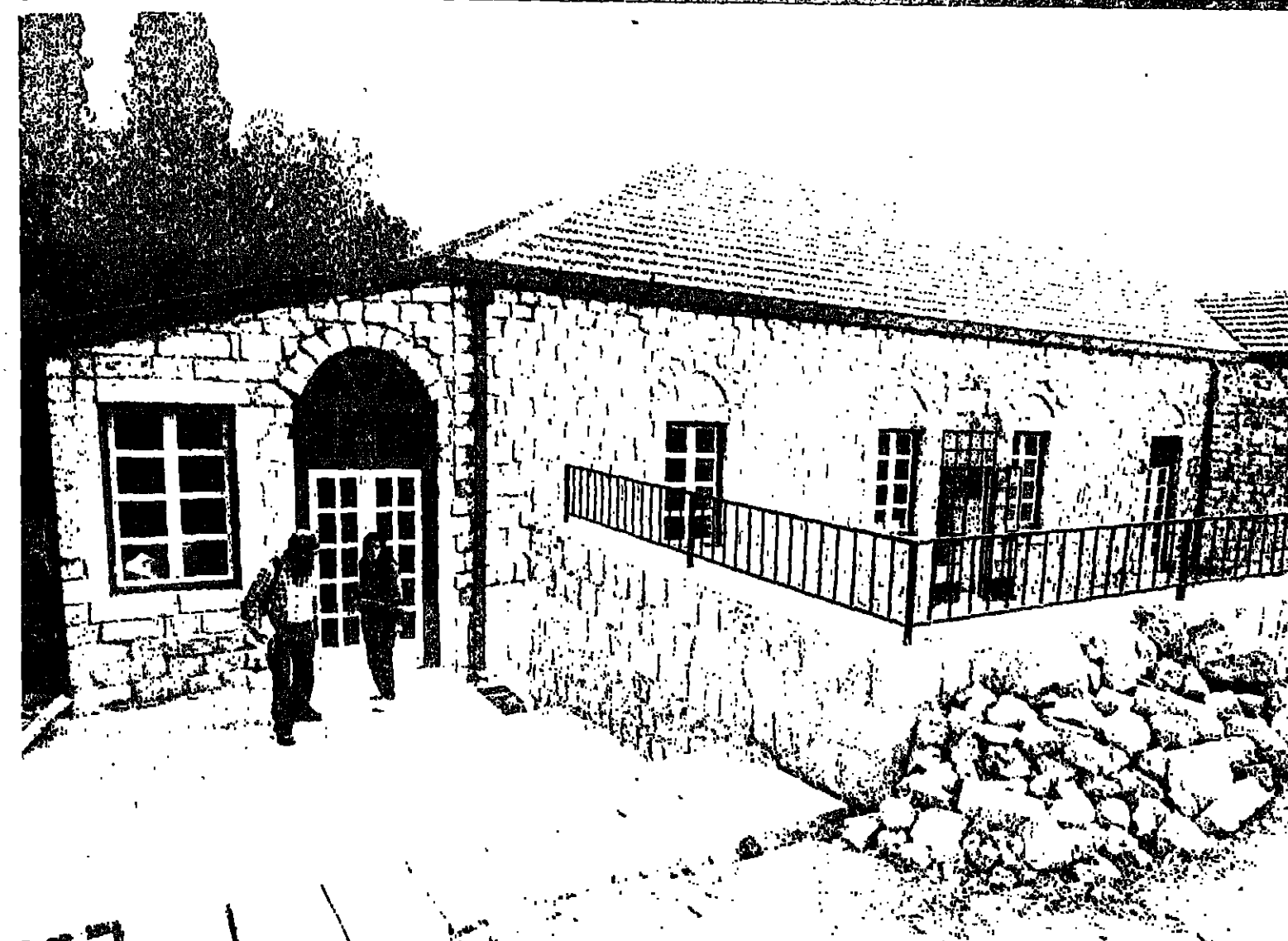
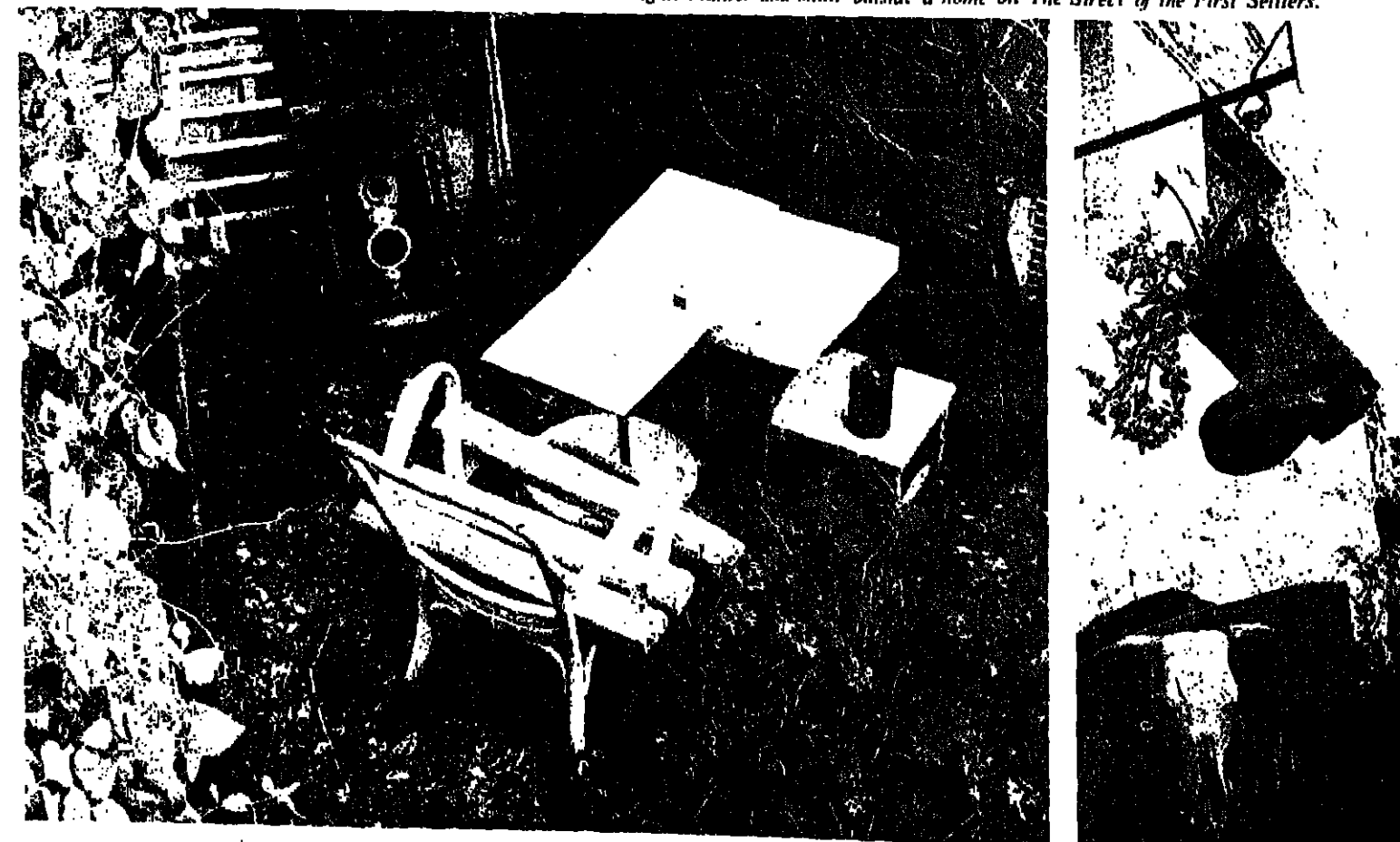
One symbolic example: water from a nearby spring used to flow freely down one of the cobbled streets. The restorers, in the name of progress, trapped it in a pipe, and the water will be used to irrigate the

Versailles garden. The artists were incensed.

But they don't object to having galleries on their street, something like those of Old Jaffa. They want to sell their work. The problem with Jaffa is its night clubs and noise, but they have no fear of that in this patch of upper Galilee.

Not all the residents of the quarter are artists: at the time we talked, Neta Banai was waiting to hear from the local council whether she could remain in the house she rents from them. She studies

Below, left: Garden furniture photographed from the American Hotel. Right: Planter and skull outside a home on The Street of the First Settlers.



Left: Beit Piza, the Baron's headquarters, restored as a centre for study of Galilee history. Right: Restoration director Maimon Abukrat looks down into the farmyard of a restored house.

agriculture at the Volcani Institute, and in Rosh Pina has been cultivating and classifying local herbs and plants.

Perhaps the most poignant battle is over the biggest building around: a four-storey shabby structure called the American Hotel. It was built by an Arab from Ja'ane who visited Chicago in the '40s and came back with a yen for skyscrapers. He left this one behind in '48.

Eight years ago, a group of free spirits set up something called the School for Man's Self-Knowledge in

the deserted building — for the practice of meditation and art. The only one of the group remaining is Arye Forat, a jeweller who makes, among other things, bracelets out of silver spoons and forks. He and his wife and two daughters occupy one floor. The ground floor contains his workshop, another artist's sculpture studio and a carpenter's workshop where Itai and an American architect named Gershon Melnikov work.

Arye had a contract with the State Lands Administration and the

local council, according to which they could only require him to leave if they found him a suitable alternative location — not easy.

Now restoration is catching up with him, too; the courts have upheld an eviction order, and he must leave by April. Says Arye: "I've invested my best years in this place, to make a place for art, where artists could get spiritual support."

Maimon says the school never existed, except in theory. Arye says the school has been open to artists who have their own means to set up

shop. So, while, the restoration society is proceeding with its plan to turn the American Hotel into workshops for artists and visiting students of art, Gershon Melnikov, sitting in his workshop there, has designed his own version of the building's future, with a floor set aside for Arye's family.

Maimon, of the restoration society, came along to the artists' street when pictures were taken for this article — and it turned out that this was his first meeting with some

of the artists and craftsmen, the first time he saw Gershon's plan.

The restoration proceeds, with anniversary events planned throughout the year, culminating in a celebration this August. It does not have the potential for bringing together past and future, for reviving history and cultivating the arts. But there is something to be said for humility and pluralism in progress; for the Orthodox Jewish practice of leaving one wall of a home slightly unfinished, to recall the destruction of the Second Temple.

Below left: Gershon Melnikov looks over his own sketch for a restored American Hotel. Right: Neta Banai, "dressed up" for a trip to Tel Aviv, stands before her front door.



The Galei Kinneret is providing the best of two worlds, Helga Dudman writes.



Uzi Werner, managing director of IRH, with the Egyptian Minister of Tourism Gamal al-Nasser and Haim Haviv, manager of the Ganei Kinneret.

Equipped to deal with the most up-to-date administrative and management techniques, Haviv is a graduate of the Tadmor Hotel School, of the Technion's Hotel Management course, and of an executive training course in America with the Sonesta Hotels chain.

At the same time, he has an inbred preference for Old World attentiveness and personal service. European in taste and behaviour, he grew up speaking French and relishing French cuisine, and feels culturally deprived if he does not have at least 200 recently purchased French books at home.

Before coming to the Galei Kinneret, he was in Paris for two years with Histours; before that he managed the Moriah Hotel in Jerusalem for eight years.

Having begun his career at the King David, where he met his wife Ishi, also a hotel professional; his service with the Dan chain also in-

At the Galei Kinneret hotel, Haviv is at home with all types of people from all over the world, and can also pull off a coup which few five-star hotel managers are capable of: he can speak the stuff in Ladino.

Having can even manage some Arabic, having lived for 15 years in Beirut, although he made no attempt to do so during the recent visit to his hotel of the Egyptian Minister of Tourism, Gamal An-Nazer. The distinguished visitor wrote in the Galei Kinneret guest book "Best food in Israel," and was well enough informed about the hotel to know that Ben-Gurion always stayed there during his Tiberias holidays.

From Major Haddad to Perry Como (who stayed at the GK while Edna Walter was manager, and wrote: "The most pleasant place in our tour — because of you, Edna, and your staff!" in the guest book), from U.S. Ambassador Samuël Lewis to his counterpart in Cairo, Ambassador Alfred Atherton, to German press magnate Axel Springer — Gulei Kinneret has attracted VIP's since it first opened.

But these days, according to

But these days, according to Haviv, glimpses of the great, gorgeous view, tranquility and good food are not in themselves enough to satisfy large numbers of guests. He is full of ideas for bringing "things to do" to the traditionally staid hotel. (Not that the new variety of summertime Israeli visitors to Tiberias are all that quiet.) Their rather noisy style brings to mind an old trick used by a cafe owner here to keep out what he considered the "riff-raff": whenever

"undesirable" guests turned up, he put a Beethoven record on the phonograph.)

One attraction already established before Haviv's arrival on the scene is a regular walking tour of the Old City of Tiberias. It is no secret there that many of these tours are conducted by Haviv's very knowledgeable mother-in-law, Elisheva Ballhorn, who ran the city's archeological museum for many years. (She also conducts the same tour for guests at the Plaza Hotel, the city's other five-star establishment).

It is also no secret that the Galei Kinneret's new social director is Haviv's wife Esti.

Among Haviv's plans for entertainment and special events are musical and film evenings, panel discussions, and special "happenings." When he was at the Moriah, he organized a very successful Moroccan Evening with tea served on the floor, and special foods; authentic ethnic decorations for the event came from the Israel Museum.

For the Galei Kinneret, Havi is considering a special event with an English flavour, to be organized in conjunction with *The Jerusalem Post*. This is to include Israel's first Scrabble competition, which Havi sees as an elaborate affair, complete with computerized scoreboards. We may not be aware of it here, but Scrabble competitions have for some time been very popular in Europe. There is even a continental journal for fans called *I e Scrabble*, and if all goes well, we may even have Scrabble-tourism come to the Galle!

Insurance is a must for travellers, Zim's insurance expert tells The Post's Ya'acov Friedler.

MOST of us vaguely know that marine insurance policies exist, yet we hardly make use of them.

We do not think about this type of coverage until something spectacular occurs. For example, we happen to be travelling on the Greek passenger ship, *m.s. Arion*, which burns out just before we debark in Haifa port with our car and luggage on board. It is on such unlucky occasions that we find ourselves regretting our airy disdain for marine insurance.

Without assuming an "I told you so" attitude, Ze'ev Weinberger, head of Zim's insurance department and a leading expert on marine insurance, told *The Jerusalem Post* that travellers should never move without insurance.

"I'm talking about people like you and me who may have saved for years for their trip. We can't afford to lose our luggage, not to mention our car, and we therefore can't afford not to insure them against loss or damage. We simply must raise the extra few hundred shekels to cover our property at replacement value," he stressed. The same advice holds for air travel.

Weinberger notes that under international conventions the ship owner (or airline) is liable only for a fixed sum compensation for each piece of luggage. In most cases, this is well below its actual value. The unfortunate traveller who loses his luggage and, as on the *Arlon*, his car as well will, if he failed to insure them, regret the trip for perhaps years to come. How easily he might have looked at the bright side, namely that he was not injured in the accident, if only he had taken out adequate insurance "which should include cover for war risks or hostile action."

When the uninsured traveller goes to court he is likely to find the judge very sympathetic but with his hands tied by the law. Only if the stricken ship happens to belong to a large company with a big turnover and strong public relations may the passengers get an *ex gratia* payment that may at least prevent his bad luck turning into a financial disaster. Car owners should know that their regular car insurance does not cover the passage by sea.

However, marine passenger insurance is only a minor factor in the multi-billion world-wide business of marine insurance.

The Zim company with its fleet of 60 freighters valued at hundreds of millions of dollars spends, or rather invests, several million dollars annually to insure its ships. The premiums comprise only a fraction of its over \$750 million turnover. But the sums are so big that wise insurance can make a big difference, especially when anything goes wrong. This unfortunately did occur for Zim during 1981 when two of its ships were lost at sea—the *Mezard*, with a big loss of crew lives, and the *Shikma* without casualty. Both ships were of Zim's older models, their book value pretty well written off. Weinberger holds it wise to insure "for book value or for replacement value which ever is higher, but never below book value," so that the financial loss will be more bearable.

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King Solomon-Sheraton Jerusalem Tel Aviv-Sheraton Eilat-Sheraton Resort Hotel (1985).

Planned projects: Tiberias, Haifa, Dead Sea.

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THE JERUSALEM POST SUPPLEMENT — TOURISM CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1982

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1982

THE JERUSALEM POST SUPPLEMENT — TOURISM CONFERENCE

PAGE FIFTEEN

THE CITY OF Haifa, with its combination of sea and mountain landscapes, should be enough to satisfy the appetite of even the most demanding traveller. But in the eyes of those involved in tourism, Haifa is a "jinx."

The city has not managed to attract the desired crowds of tourists who flock elsewhere in Israel; it has seldom been more than just a convenient stopover between the Golan Heights and points south.

There are many reasons for this phenomenon. Local travel agents, in a recent meeting with the Ministry of Tourism's director general Rafi Farber, blamed Haifa's tourism troubles on hotel owners.

Haifa is far from Israel's sole international airport and transportation there is extremely expensive. Unless hoteliers can help to attract people, agents claimed, tour operators won't include the city on their maps.

Furthermore, they maintained, it is absurd that Haifa has no more than 900 hotel rooms — the total occupancy of one of Tel Aviv's major hotels — to offer travellers.

"There's no use in trying to bring large international conventions here," they said. "Because people would have nowhere to spend the night." The participants would go instead to Nahariya or Netanya, so why not hold conventions there in the first place?

Hotel owners at the same meeting put the blame on the travel agents who, they said, should see to it that tour buses stay in Haifa two days and not two hours as they usually do.

Hotels, the owners claimed, have no reason to foot the bill for groups' transportation from the airport as travel agents demand, and the latter retaliate by cutting tourism down to a trickle. It's a matter of money: trips to Europe give larger percentages to them so that's what agents prefer selling, the hoteliers alleged.

Both groups joined forces to blame local and national authorities for the situation. Regulations and bureaucracy in Haifa are annoying, they agreed, and the government is clearly not tourism-minded.

Haim Schiff of Schiff Hotels, told how Haifa MK Amnon Linn approached him a few years ago insisting that he take a plot by the city's southern entrance and build a high-quality hotel there.

"He assured me that I'd have all the necessary permits within six months at most because City Hall

Nobody's child

Everybody's blaming everyone else for Haifa's tourism problems, says Mary Hirschfeld.



(Werner Braun)

wanted it to be raised as quickly as possible," said Schiff. To this day, things have not materialized and neither has a plan for Schiff to erect a hotel in the Ramat Hadar district.

"Busy people like myself have no time to run from one office to another dealing with papers. The least City Hall could do is to facilitate such matters," he complained to Mayor Arye Gurel. "Give me the green light and tomorrow at 8.00 in the morning I'll be there with bulldozers to start construction!"

To which Gurel replied: "You could have done it long ago. We gave you the option to use both plots way back in 1971. Why haven't you done anything with it?"

The real question it's does Haifa have anything to offer tourists? Many Haifaites would answer no (though some say with irony that the

best thing in the city is the coastal road to Tel Aviv).

Local Hotel Owners' Association Chairman Michael Dresner, a second-generation hotelier who said tourism in Haifa "does not pay off anymore," explained that while only one hotel has opened here during the past 15 years, the 100-room Nof, over a dozen have closed down.

Dresner said that the government has never given Haifa a "fair deal." And at this stage "not even the Tourism Ministry's entire budget could be of help."

The director of EFTACH (Hebrew acronym for Haifa's Tourism Development Association), David Plonsky, has a different opinion. He told *The Jerusalem Post* recently that within five years at the most, Haifa will become a major tourist centre. The city already has the infrastructure and all that is

necessary is good organization. "Ten years ago there wasn't even a brochure on Haifa that we could use to sell the city abroad," he said. In fact, early residents and businessmen in Haifa refused to see tourism as a profitable commercial field which could potentially turn into a booming industry with pragmatic thinking, initiative and money. For them, Plonsky said, tourism was *hifsheshefen* — not to be taken too seriously.

When Eftach came along in 1975, old attitudes were already changing. Its very creation showed how people were ready to tackle the tourism issue.

"We drew up a list of priorities, such as what sites we would like to turn into central tourist attractions. Those had to be spruced up, renovated and improved so as to bring them up to desirable standards." Among those sites is the Carmel

Rachel, consisting of a large swimming pool, a children's pool and all-weather tennis courts are also at our guests' disposal.

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Public transportation from the kibbutz to the centre of town departs every 15 minutes and continues until midnight, excluding Friday evenings. The convenient geographical position of Mitzpeh Rachel enables its guests to plan daily excursions to the Dead Sea, Masada and Ein Gedi, which are only an hour's drive away.

Top Compound. EFTACH's most ambitious project so far.

"It will consist of the Stella Maris Lookout Point (at the French Carmel), a one-kilometre path that will pass by an abandoned windmill-turned chapel which few people know about, and will reach the Maritime and Illegal Immigration Museums by the Coastal Road. We will have all that ready before the end of the year," Plonsky explained.

A cablecar linking Stella Maris to the Promenade in Bat Galim is part of the project, but that may take some more time. "Meanwhile, people already enjoy the 300-metre-long decorated sidewalk by the sea in Bat Galim, surrounded by romantic street lamps, benches and cafes," he said.

The windmill-turned-chapel is to be one of the area's highlights, according to Plonsky. Originally built almost a century ago by an Asclarian pilgrim on the land of the nearby Carmelite monastery, the windmill was abandoned because none of the monks knew how to operate it. It was later transformed into the Chapel for the Holy Family, Plonsky explained. According to a Carmelite legend, the Virgin Mary used to come on pilgrimage every year to the Carmel to visit the prophet Elijah.

The chapel, in addition to Elijah's Cave which EFTACH is also renovating at the foot of the mountain, will turn the area into an important site for tourists of all religions, according to Plonsky.

EFTACH has also been busy refurbishing Kaiser Wilhelm's obelisk and making a lookout point there, where the Kaiser himself stood in 1890 surveying the German Colony neighbourhood from afar. At that same place, in 1918, Turkish forces fell at the hands of Allenby's forces, under Brigadier-General Malcolm King, marking the end of four centuries of Ottoman occupation in the region.

To commemorate this historical event, Plonsky discovered and brought up an old cannon which has been placed near the obelisk. "We have already managed to boost internal tourism by 35 per cent in the past two years, and we are confident much more can be done." And, Plonsky added optimistically, whether on the Carmel or downtown, tourists will learn that Haifa is more than a ride through Rehov Yafe Nof — there are activities, and free and reasonably priced entertainment for all.

"We drew up a list of priorities, such as what sites we would like to turn into central tourist attractions. Those had to be spruced up, renovated and improved so as to bring them up to desirable standards." Among those sites is the Carmel



The Matrilarch, Rachel

For further information, please contact Mitzpeh Rachel Guest House, P.O.B. 98, Jerusalem, 91000. Tel. 02-715712. 02-715041, Telex 35707 (attention Mitzpeh Rachel).

We look forward to welcoming you!

Can't buy me love

Galina Vroman finds possibilities in Incentive Tours.

TO GET their salesmen to sell more and their customers to buy more, large companies set up incentive programmes to reward their most outstanding employees and clients.

Lavish vacations have become one popular way of giving an often tax-deductible thank you to those who have done the most to push up profits. In 1980, companies spent about \$1.8 billion sending people off on incentive trips.

"If you reward someone with money, he's likely to use it to fix his roof. If you reward him with pots and pans, he'll end up sticking them in his kitchen closet and no one will know about it. But an all-expenses-paid vacation is something everyone is sure to notice. Nothing can beat it in terms of recognition and status," says Israel Scher of Eden Tours and Travel, a leader in Israel in managing incentive tours.

Between 2,000 and 3,000 people visit Israel each year on incentive travel programmes. These trips are meant to be the dream vacation of a lifetime, with the best of winning and dining, and lots of special treats for the deserving. Promoters in Israel argue that the country offers perfect combination of exotic Mediterranean atmosphere and luxury Western accommodations.

Israel is uniquely equipped, they say, to provide Beduin evenings with belly-dancing in desert tents, kibbutz outings, dancing under the stars at the ancient Roman amphitheatre in Caesarea and visits to historic Jerusalem.

"Companies are always on the look-out for new destinations, a bit different, a bit more exotic than what they've offered before," Scher said.

FOR THOSE who have already offered incentives to Europe, the U.S. and the Caribbean, Israel is a new and untold destination. Some groups have combined Israel and Egypt on an incentive trip.

"Your future in incentives is very bright," Dieter Huckestein, general manager of the Tel Aviv Hilton has said. The Hiltons in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, the King David Hotel and a number of other five-star hotels have been among the most popular hotels for incentive happenings.

Not everyone shares Huckestein's optimism. Shmuel Pilovsky of Kopel Tours believes that the incentive market in Israel is limited. "When a company offers an incentive vacation, it's concerned about the budget, and in this we can offer no special advantage."

But other tourism veterans in Israel say that the country's small size is an advantage because a group can visit and acquire a "feel" for the country after even a short stay of a week or less.

It's taken the tourism industry a few years to adapt to the incentive market, according to Scher. "The industry had to get geared to providing the extra-special treatment which companies sponsoring incentive trips expect for their clients."

(For another view of incentive tours, see next page.)



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MITZPEH RACHEL

A Frontier Youth Hostel in the Past — a Kibbutz Guest House Today

Mitzpeh Rachel Kibbutz Guest House is situated on the southern corner of Kibbutz Ramat Rachel. It is only a 10 minute drive from the centre of Jerusalem and a 5-minute drive from Bethlehem. From this point, you can clearly see the road along which the Matrilarch Rachel travelled with her husband, the Patriarch Jacob, on their way to Bethlehem.

The Guest House, affording a wonderful view of Bethlehem and the Judean Desert, consists of single and double rooms with private facilities. There are also 4-bed dormitories, which are specially suitable for students and youth groups. Facilities for camping are also available.

The Sports Centre of Mitzpeh



Looking towards Bethlehem from the swimming pool.

I'VE JUST finished travelling with an Incentive Tour. That's quite an interesting idea, and I'd never heard of it before. Incentives are a way for a company to encourage salesmen to sell more of whatever it is the company produces. If you go over a certain quota, then you have a certain number of bonus points, which means access to a catalogue of gifts, or a trip to Hawaii — or a week in Israel.

Apparently incentives are common enough and acceptable throughout the commercial world. I was astonished at the size and range of incentive companies — not the company selling the product, but whole gigantic corporations, whose function is to organize incentives, to write and print and distribute gift catalogues and stock the merchandise, to work up the tours, packages and hotels for the trips abroad, and heavens knows what else. I don't have figures, but it's a very big business in America.

In my group, members were camera dealers, and their incentive was offered by one of the camera companies. So if you have a shop full of cameras, Nikon, Pentax, Canon, Vivitar, Mamiya and Minolta, and if you sell a lot of, say, Vivitar, then the Vivitar corporation will give you an incentive bonus — in this case a trip to Israel.

So far so good. Or is it? I began to have my doubts. If you are selling one product from one company, like life insurance or Ford cars, and the company wants to encourage you to sell, then it's OK to have bonus points, gifts and incentives. But if you have a shop full of different products, and you, the salesman, have to advise the customer, then the moral aspects of the situation are less clear.

You've got a dozen different brands of cameras and lenses in the store, and someone comes in to buy. Is your motivation now to sell him what he needs, can afford, and suits his purpose, or is it to get a free trip to Israel? If Vivitar offers a trip to Israel, maybe Pentax will send you to Japan. Maybe Mamiya has a better gift catalogue or Canon will help you pay the mortgage. With so much private calculating going on in the back of the salesman's mind, has he got time to worry about the customer? And he, poor devil, is the one who pays for it all.

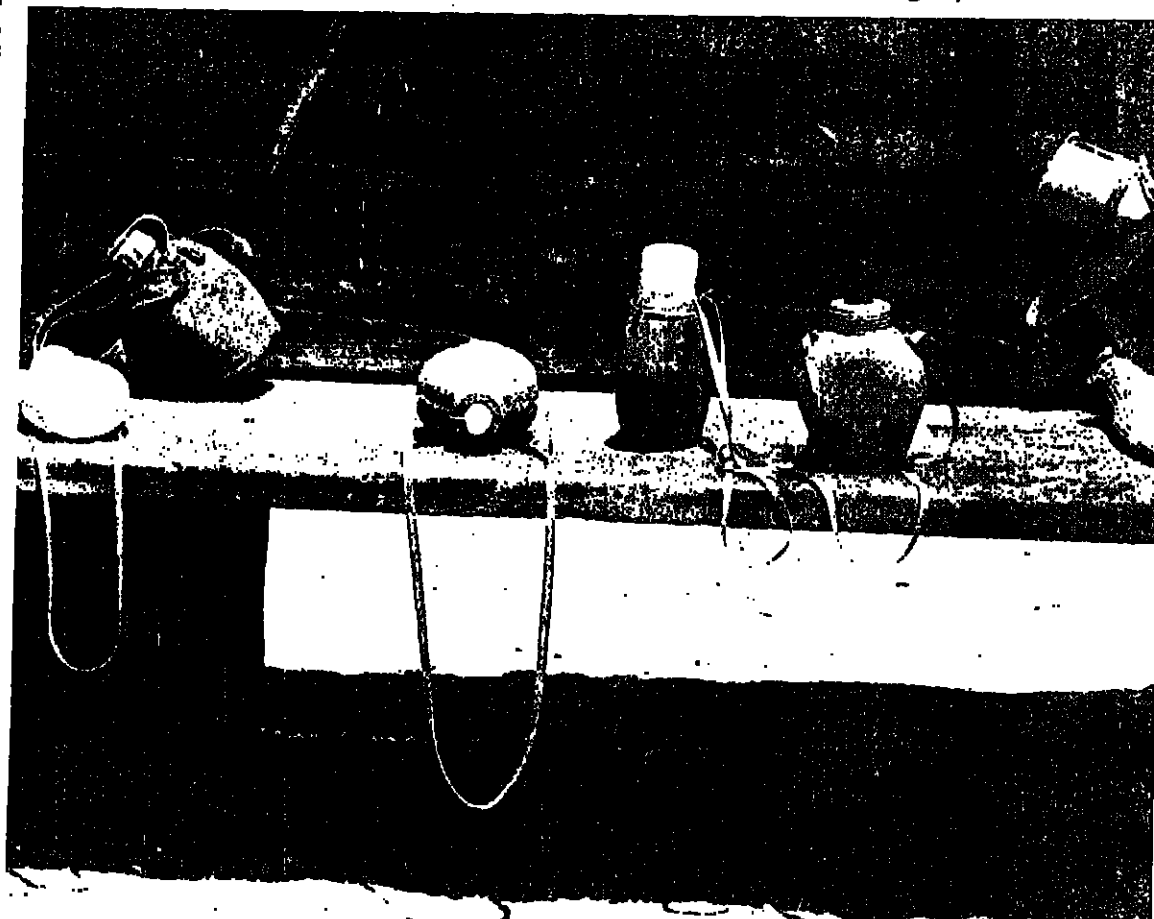
There is not much sense in pushing this argument too far. I never did know much about the commercial world, and maybe these thoughts reflect my own naivete more than a real problem. That's all business, and my thing is guiding tourists. You know — walking the land, history, archeology and all that. Wrong again, Walter. The guides are in a commercial situation, right in the middle of it, only playing a game they don't understand by strange rules.

IF MY SERVICES for this Incentive Group cost, say \$150, the travel agent in New York has already billed the customer \$175 or \$200. The local agent has taken his commission, not less than 20 per cent, which is highway robbery. When the travel agent gave the work to a driver-guides' cooperative, of which I used to be a member, and they gave the work to me because all their own men were busy, then the cooperative took another five per cent commission, and I ended up working for 75 per cent of my wage.

And why not? Travel agents operate a commercial proposition, and live on commissions. There's no law or control over how much they charge, especially to guides who are

Carry that weight

Tour guide Walter Zanger finds himself in a very strange profession.



(Israel Talby)

dependent on them for employment. So they try to pay as little as possible — and why not? It's a commercial proposition.

I have been given lists of approved restaurants by travel agents, with instructions to sign the owner on a form when I go in there with my tourists to eat. That way the travel agent can get his commission. Why not? It's a commercial proposition. Travel agents live on commissions — from the airlines, car rental firms, restaurants and shops. So why not on the guides, too?

I have been given a list of agent-approved shops, with instructions that I am to take my group shopping only at these places, and to tell the agent when I've done so.

The agent calls the shop, tells them a bus-load of his is coming, and the shop pays the agent \$200 for the service, whether or not the tourists buy anything. It's a commercial proposition.

But they are not the only group making money on tourism. Traveling through the North recently, I discovered that they're charging money to get to Gamla. The word is that Bania is next. We have already discovered that it costs a lot of money to go to Hammat Gader because of the famous alligators.

All over the country, the turnstiles are going up, and someone is collecting money. I'm all right, because I get into all these places for free. My tourists don't mind, because in dollar terms it's not really going to make any difference if you add another \$25 entrance fees to the cost of the tour. But did anyone make a calculation how much it would cost an average Israeli who loves his country and

wants to travel, to take his wife and 2.73 kids to Masada?

Or, let's try another idea. We want to go on vacation, away from Jerusalem. So, let's book in at a super place like the guest house at Geshet Ha-Ziv, and go touring. Rosh Hamira costs money (you can't even walk down, like we used to do; they've destroyed the path). The Crusader city in Acre costs money. Acre jail costs money. The museum at Kibbutz Lohamei Hageta'ot, Megiddo, Beit Shearim, the museums of Haifa — they all cost money. So, what's left for the poor Israeli who loves his country but can't afford entrance fees?

He can walk to the Montfort castle (the turnstile manufacturers haven't discovered that one yet), see the panorama on the top of the Carmel, visit the Bahai gardens and take a tour of the Dagon silo and archeology collection.

Between the National Parks Authority, the Nature Reserves Authority, the various local councils, the kibbutzim and their national programme of tourist site development, the municipal corporations, private, public, and semi-public bodies, the churches (although, to their credit, the churches charge only nominal entrance fees), synagogues, even Hadassah Hospital — everyone wants to get into the act, and they're all charging me money to visit my country. The government, whose job should be to keep the State of Israel accessible to the people of Israel, not only doesn't ban the turnstiles, but encourages them. Slowly but surely, the country is being fenced off by the turnstile people. Everyone is making money, even the guide.

The guide? Yeah, the pay's not bad. You can make \$150 a day on the car, or \$62 a day on a bus, provided you aren't dependant on unscrupulous agents. On the car 20 per cent comes off before you start, with every travel agent. On the bus, the honest agents pay full rates. The ones making money pay less, a lot less. For those reduced to the lowest ranks of desperation, there's always work at the Jewish Agency, for \$44 (payable five months late). But the agent is no fool. He knows the guides make extra money, on tips and shopping, and that there are always more guides than jobs.

So why pay more than he has to? He is, after all, a commercial proposition. And the guide has to compete as well as he can. With luck, and a big family in America, you can sometimes swing it that your employment comes directly from overseas, without the active intervention of local agents. Then you can work like a human being, make a lot of money, honestly, without becoming a flunky, hassling for tips or a *gonny* taking commissions under the table. Or you can be so experienced and famous that the work comes in on your own terms.

But who's in that position? How many guides can afford the luxury of turning down work? You'd better work when it's offered, because next month might be dry, and at the end of the year if you got 175-200 days guiding, you did a lot.

At least the guide is better off than the bus driver (*everybody's* better off than a bus driver). Unless he's a member of Egged, the bus driver will have a hard time paying the grocery bill if he doesn't make substantial amounts in tips and commissions. I know of few other

groups so consistently screwed by their employers and so little able to defend themselves (because they're so easy to replace). Maybe they're pulling my leg, but I never worked with a bus driver (apart from members of Egged/Dan) who didn't cry over money. Bus companies know the driver is going to make tips and commissions, so why pay him anything like a normal salary?

The guide is better off: \$62 a day is not bad, if you can get it, and get enough of it. But there the party stops, because while everyone else is making money, the travel agents, hotels, churches, rent-a-cars, government bodies, kibbutzim, Hadassah Hospital, etc., the guide is special. He's taken a two-year long course. He's a teacher, a professional. And, by world standards, a good one too. But guides may not be commercial, by law. Guides are forbidden to advertise (like doctors and dentists and lawyers — they're fancy company). They are forbidden to take commissions from shops, hotels, or airlines. While the Ministry of Tourism has written to me that it will not interfere in the matter of commissions between agent and guide, it will, and has, interfered violently in enforcing the ban on shopping. As well it should, in my opinion.

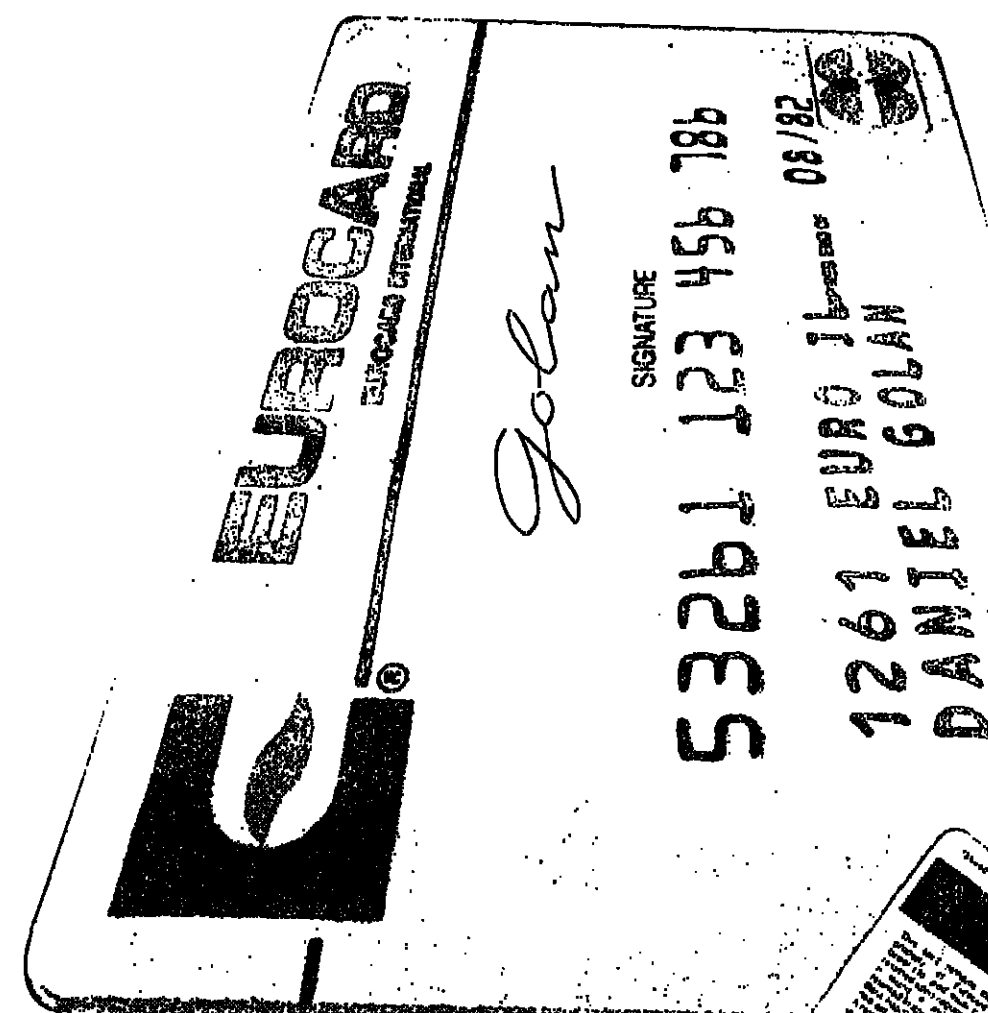
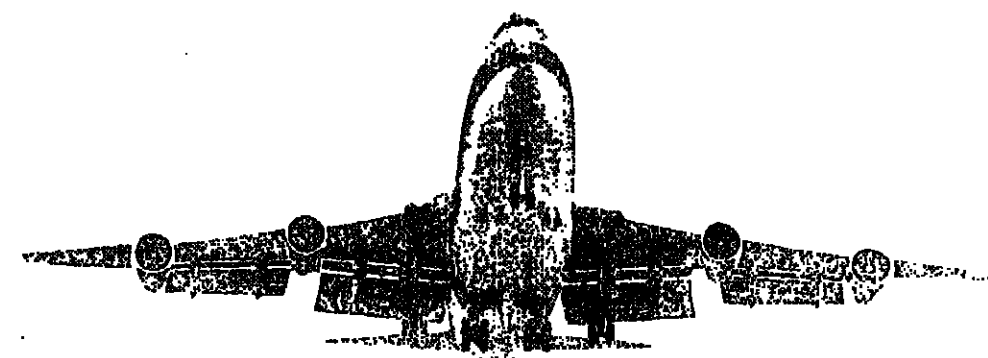
All right, don't shop. It's illegal. And what about tips? A 15% per person per day on a bus of 45 people for eight days comes out to a lot of money. Unless you're a *frier*, you don't even have to declare it to income tax.

What does this matter of tipping do for the guide's self-esteem, or for the relationship between him and his tourists? It can't be that I'm the only one who's bothered by this. If you went to Masada with Prof. Yadin, or to Gamla with Shmaryahu Gutman, and you had a beautiful and interesting and moving and inspiring trip, would you give them a tip? Do you tip the lady who teaches your kids in 5th grade? Do you tip a teacher the same as you tip a doorman, driver, bell-boy, waiter or porter? Do you tip your lawyer, doctor, dentist or accountant? The whole thing's cockeyed. The guide is expected to be professional *vis-à-vis* the tourist, commercial *vis-à-vis* the agent, and a *tsadik* compared to the rest of the tourism industry.

IT IS a very strange situation, and a very strange profession indeed. In my opinion, the present situation is unstable and unhealthy. The status quo encourages law-breaking maybe even compels it. The first course of action is clearly a strong professional organization of guides. With a good union, aggressive leadership and tough bargaining, we might get to a uniform wage for all guides, for a limit to commissions payable, and fair distribution of work. I believe that the whole industry would benefit from such an organization, and wish good luck to those working on the matter.

I believe it's time for the government, that is the Ministry of Tourism, to get its own act together. Now that we have our own minister again maybe the ministry can make some decisions. Are we professional, or commercial? May we take commissions? Then why must we pay them? May we advertise? May we charge as much as we can get, and work for as much as we're offered? What are the limits of a guide's responsibility to his travel agent, and vice versa? How long do we have to wait before we get paid for work done? And so on and so on. It's time for some decisions, and some honest talking.

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haifa For further information contact Haifa Tourism Development Association 10 Achad Ha'am St., Haifa, 33103, Israel Tel. 04 671845

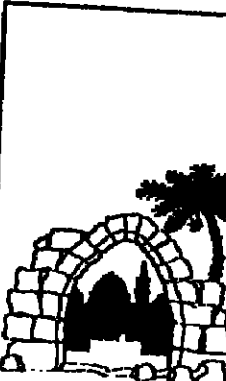
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PAGE TWENTY-TWO

A taste of honey

Israel's sun and beaches could attract millions of tourists if we were to set up the proper infrastructure, Kopel Tours managing director Shmuel Pilovsky, tells Galina Vromen.

SETTING about to find Shmuel Pilovsky, executive director of K-Holdings Ltd., I began to glimpse the size of the Kopel tourism network. I remembered once visiting a Kopel office in the Tel Aviv five-star hotel district along the sea, and was certain I would find him there. It turned out that this was the headquarters of Conventions (Kopel Tours) Ltd., just one of the 10 companies of the \$100m. empire.

I was told I would find Pilovsky at K-Holdings' head office at 13 Tchernichovsky St. A short way down this winding sidewalk in the heart of Tel Aviv's business area, I saw a small Kopel office and walked in.

But it was just one of the company's many branch offices. When I did find Pilovsky (having passed still another Kopel office on the same street), he told me that the small office at 4 Tchernichovsky was where the empire began in 1936 when his father-in-law, Kopel Rosenberg, opened a taxi stand that served passengers going to Beirut and Amman.

By 1938, Rosenberg and his wife had expanded their company into Kopel Tours to handle the trickle of tourism coming to Mandatory Palestine.

The holding company today employ about 650 people in Israel and abroad.

Its Kopel Tours subsidiary with a turnover of \$16.5m. in 1981, claims to be the largest tour operator in Israel, handling over 10 per cent of all tourists who visit the country each year.

"The only way for tourism to grow in Israel is from vacation tourism. We're putting all our efforts there," says Pilovsky, managing director of Kopel Tours.

"Within 10 years, Israel could compete with Greece," he says. Pilovsky believes that, like Greece, Israel could attract millions of tourists to its sun-soaked beaches if it set up the proper infrastructure. "Israel's beaches at Bat Yam can compete with any Greek beach,"

Pilovsky claims. But, he adds, Israel has not put enough effort into providing night-life, eateries and beach services.

"We have tremendous advantages as the land of the Bible, as a place with sun and lots of interesting things to see. We tend to forget about these advantages because we live here," Pilovsky says.

KOPEL TOURS has been instrumental in harnessing Israel's potential. It has, for example, set up a windsurfing school in Eilat and organized special tours for senior citizens seeking a seaside rest with a little sightseeing. It is also encouraging Christian pilgrims to take its tours to Israel.

Kopel is taking advantage of Israel's innovative agricultural technology and its unique kibbutz settlements to provide tours geared to beekeepers, dairy and poultry farmers and other professionals in agriculture.

Its convention subsidiary, established in 1972, handles all aspects of international congresses in Israel. In August, Kopel will be in charge of the largest convention ever to be held in Israel, when 3,000 delegates from Hadassah hold a congress in Jerusalem.

Despite an overall 3 per cent decrease in tourism to Israel in 1981, K-Holdings claims to have increased its turnover by one third. It projects another 25 per cent increase in 1982.

K-Holdings services many of its incoming tourists through its own hotels and car rental company. K-Hotels Ltd. runs or owns popular-priced hotels at prime seaside spots in Eilat, Herzliya, Nahariya and Netanya. The four-year-old division has been completing transactions which will soon put it in charge of seven hotels throughout Israel.

Kopel (Drive Yourself) Ltd. car rental, for example, was set up in 1969, as the network realized that it was generating enough car rentals to start up its own company and keep the profits. Today, with 350

vehicles, the firm is the largest Israeli-owned car rental company, and is the third-largest in the country, after two top international rental companies.

THE SAME philosophy has led Kopel to set up — since 1979 — its own car park, advertising agency and insurance company.

"We found we were spending too much money on insurance, we decided to open our own company," says Pilovsky. So, K-Insurance Ltd. came into being. "It was the same with advertising: we had so many brochures to print and such a constant flow of advertisements that we decided to do it all ourselves," Pilovsky said. That led to K-Advertising, today one of the top 10 firms in the country.

K-Parking, originally started to provide parking for Kopel's car rental company, runs two lots and garages at Atarim Square and at the Clal building in Tel Aviv.

Today these three service companies account for roughly a third of K-Holdings' turnover and 20 per cent of the conglomerate's profits.

Outgoing tourism is also a major part of Kopel's operations, accounting for 40 per cent of the holding company's profits. Its outgoing operations are Kopel Travel, with 17 retail travel agencies throughout Israel, and Kshet Tourism Wholesalers. Together the companies claim to handle vacation tourism for about 15 per cent of all Israelis who go abroad each year.

"Recently we've been going heavily into charters, offering flights to places like Majorca, Greece and southern Italy," Pilovsky said. Co-owner Samy Rosenberg, whose father began the K-Holdings empire, directs Kopel's outgoing operations.

The outgoing companies have long provided tours to the U.S., Western Europe, Scandinavia and the Far East. To complement the services provided from Israel, Kopel has outlets in the U.S. and Europe.

respect, the country is in the major leagues, next to the United States and Japan.

Rivlin pointed out that there is no government subsidy for conventions. Because of the quantity of people who come for the conferences and the fact that organizers try to arrange the events during slack tourist months like June, September and November, airlines and hotels can offer special convention discount rates.

But what can be done about the present slump in international congress business in Israel? Rivlin said he believes that first Jewish organizations — of which there are many, especially in the U.S. — should be encouraged to plan such events here. He noted that Hadassah will be holding this year only its second convention in 33 years in Israel; B'nai Brith has had three here since the state was established.

Paperback writer

Walter Zanger looks at the latest in guide books.

THERE CAN'T be many countries in the world as complicated as Israel. The ruins of 5,000 years of uninterrupted history lie strewn over the landscape, each place with its own history. Add to the ruins an emotional charge — for the ancestors of Jews, Christians and Moslems functioned in the same landscape — and one sees how the traveller is apt to be confused.

Small wonder that guide books to the Holy Land fill the bookshelves. Since the Bordeaux Pilgrim crossed down the coast from Lebanon, in the year 333 A.D. travellers, pilgrims, clergymen, merchants, scholars, explorers, engineers and doctors have written about what they saw, what they felt, and what they thought would be of use to those coming after them. The urge to explain seems irresistible.

The question is, Who's your audience? The guide book must suit the traveller, and he who travels with an encyclopedia of archeology is not the same as the pilgrim walking with devotional tracts and the book of Psalms. Prof. Pax's booklet, actually an extract from a larger book, is definitely of the devotional kind. It is beautifully produced, graced with first-class colour photographs (by Gideon Selin), a clear and lively text and quite a lot of good information and intelligent observation. Prof. Pax brings a lively imagination to the devotional task, trying to show how Jerusalem of today is the same kind of city as the one Jesus knew, and how we can learn to feel what Jesus felt by knowing the city, and the country. I don't believe that whole thesis is tenable, or that Prof. Pax has helped us much in understanding the New Testament, but it is a pleasure to read what he sees and feels in Jerusalem, and to look at the pictures. Not a guide book at all, *Jesus in Jerusalem* is as interesting and intelligent as any devotional literature I ever saw.

AT THE OTHER end of the scale is Prof. Murphey-O'Connor's Guide. It's all business, and it's all good. Dividing the book into 2 sections,

THE HOLY LAND An Archaeological Guide from Earliest Times to 1700 by Jerome Murphey O'Connor, OP, Oxford University Press, 1980. 320 pp. (paperback), £5.95

A PILGRIM'S INTERFAITH GUIDE TO THE HOLY LAND by Franklin H. Littell, Jerusalem Post-Carta, 1981. 151 pp. (paperback). No price stated.

JESUS IN JERUSALEM by Prof. Wolfgang Pax, Doron Publications, 1981. 48 pp. (paperback). No price stated.

the author treats the city of Jerusalem in the first part and the rest of the country in the second. The Jerusalem section is arranged geographically, by areas of the town, while the part about the rest of the land, nearly 100 sites, is given alphabetically.

The marvel of the book is the way the author has managed to compress nearly everything worth knowing into a paragraph or two, and to come out with a text that is helpful and readable. Even if it doesn't always work (I had a terrible time trying to get through the description of the Jaffa Gate Citadel, until I finally gave up, even if, for the sake of brevity, Prof. Murphey-O'Connor gives us as fact what is still only an educated guess (the building of the walls around Jerusalem), his guide book is the most useful single book of its kind I know. If I had only one guide book to take, I'd take Murphey-O'Connor.

THERE IS no problem with imaginative graphics and lay-out with Franklin Littell's new small *Pilgrim's Guide*. It is certainly an attractive affair, but the text is wanting. There's hardly a page without mistakes, some of them silly and inconsequential. For example, Safed is not the highest city in the country — Hebron is higher; Tiberias was founded in the first

century A.D., not B.C.; Judah Ha-Nassi completed the Mishna at Beit Shearim, modern excavations do not verify the Biblical account of Jericho's destruction, they confuse it; and you can't see the Jordan river from there, so a trip to Jericho can't be memorable because of the view of it.

There are larger questions of selection; with a small book of 25 sites it seems capricious to include the Bahai shrines, Hai Bar, Nebi Shueib, Tantur, and Yehiam, and to spend two full pages on Nes Amim, dear as that settlement is to Dr. Littell's heart (and to mine!). The historical maps are O.K., and it's hard to find fault with a 40-page list of famous people who had places named after them.

BUT THE whole problem of audience confronts us in this small book, and many others like it. Who was it written for? For the serious traveller? He will find too many mistakes too soon, and discard the book. Nor is it for the simple faithful. The ordinary tourist/pilgrim won't get anywhere near Tantur, the Hai Bar, Nebi Shueib or Yehiam. The book won't help anybody who needs to learn about Bethlehem. It's not there. Nor are Ashkelon, Avdat, Mount Tabor, or any of the Nabatean cities of the Negev.

So what and whom did the publishers have in mind when producing this small book? Carta and *The Jerusalem Post* are serious operations, with a long list of first-class books behind them. Someone at these firms should have known that St. John is not from Coziba but from Thebes, that Acre and not Jaffa was the chief port of the country, that Elijah's cave is not in Bat Galim, that Jerusalem was destroyed in 581 B.C., not 520, and that the Romans were well and truly planted in Judea long before Herod showed up.

While one has nothing but the highest praise for the lay-out, graphics and design of this pretty book, I'll stick with Murphey-O'Connor.

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NAME.....
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Ticket to ride

Seventy per cent of all tourists go on Egged tours, Yitzhak Oked learns.

THERE IS HARDLY any sort of tourism activity in this country at which Egged's trusty red and white buses aren't seen.

First, there are the group charter tours organized by Egged Tours, 25-year-old branch of the Egged bus cooperative. These tours are tailor-made for their customers from abroad and planned from the minute they arrive in Israel until they board the planes to go back home.

Then there are the package tours, usually one or two days long, for tourists that come on their own, or business people that find some free time between professional calls.

The Egged tourist pass can be purchased for a one-, two-, or four-week period and enables people to travel on all Egged bus lines without purchasing tickets each time.

Egged Tours also has a thriving tourist service for Israelis where the bus driver and guide (sometimes the same person) speak in Hebrew. This service is mainly used by school groups on their yearly trips about the country. But private businesses also take advantage of these Hebrew tours when management and/or workers' committees decide to give employees a treat and show them part of the country.

Yigal Cohen, general manager of Egged Tours, was appointed a short time ago and has been trying out some new ideas. The company is busy developing new touring routes — a costly and complicated business.

According to Cohen, Egged carefully works out new routes after much research and then implements them, taking the risk that they may be a flop with the tourists. But if a

new tour idea is a success, "you know it because suddenly all our competitors are adding that route to their list of tourist attractions," says Cohen. "The problem is that we had to invest in developing it while our competitors receive it on a silver platter."

With the upcoming withdrawal from Sinai, Egged is trying to think of alternative, new tours elsewhere in the country.

WE ARE NOW coming out with new touring routes to places in Judea and Samaria which I'm sure even veteran Israelis, as well as tourists, will enjoy visiting," according to Cohen.

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Come together

Yitzhak Oked meets the Kenes convention people.

On the positive side, Rivlin explained, Israel is a country that has plenty to offer the "congress tourist," and it attracts people — Jews and non-Jews alike — because it is a country often read and heard about in the world's media. Israel has also begun to acquire a positive reputation because of its professionals in the field of organizing international congresses; in this

WHAT DO Jewish studies, child psychiatry, aviation and space medicine, Jewish culinary art, and women have in common? All of these have been among the topics for international congresses held in the past here in Israel.

Gideon Rivlin, the managing director of Kenes which specializes in organizing international congresses, is one of the veterans in his business beyond the borders of Israel, and Rivlin himself is looked upon internationally as one of the pioneers and experts in planning these conferences.

President of the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers, Rivlin agreed that Israel faces problems in trying to attract congresses. He said he is hopeful that the prime minister's tourism conference will find a solution to some of these problems.

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